

# THE CITIZEN

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 1964

GLO'STER GAVE OXFORD TASTE OF THEIR OWN MEDICINE

OXFORD UNIVERSITY 12 Pts., GLOUCESTER 13 Pts.

The Rugby world is agape for the weeks before the Varsity match, and critics pay more than usual attention to the merits and performance of Oxford and Cambridge – to the detriment of the teams they meet.

Cambridge always seem to win and, judging by Oxford's performance against Gloucester on Saturday, they are all set to do so again this season. In the meantime, as I say, the pundits dismiss the performances of clubs like Gloucester as of secondary importance.

And on Saturday sections of the Oxford crowd were positively stentorian in their protests against Gloucester's method of winning a match. After all weren't Gloucester here to give the young gentlemen a practice before they went to Twickers ?

## HARD TACKLING GAME

And dammit the bounders insisted on playing a hard-tackling game. You could just see it in their faces, old boy, they actually wanted to win! Gloucester's centres Ron Pitt and John Bayliss both came in for this kind of gentlemanly outrage – simply because they did not let the young gentlemen in the Oxford back division have it all their own way.

Gloucester went out to win and in the opening stages it looked as if they would have their work cut out. For Ken Houston, the Oxford winger went over in the opening five minutes of the game.

Then the watchful Ford, with his long arms outstretched charged down a vital clearance kick near the Oxford line and Gloucester had levelled.

## FIELD DAY

Partnered by Dick Smith, he had a field day at wing forward and the two succeeded in making the Oxford halves look second rate.

Indeed it was these two who scored Gloucester's only tries – both of which Rutherford, who also kicked a beautiful 50-yard penalty, converted.

Mickie Booth, as crafty a player as any in the four-counties played the tacticians' game throughout and showed up the Oxford link.

With Ainge in fine form, at fly-half, the two played well both to the pack and the threes, although the Gloucester three-quarters were notable chiefly for extremely lusty tackling.

## LITTLE SURPRISED

Apart from two excellent breaks by the weaving Bayliss, the Gloucester backs contributed little which was effective to attacking moves.

Booth, usually confident of playing behind a strong, winning pack, must have been a little surprised that his eight had not, in fact, ground down the Oxford forwards.

Gloucester undoubtedly had more guile, weight and experience forward but Oxford were still capable of a tremendously strong shove in the tight, sometimes pushing the Gloucester pack off the ball, although the Cherry and Whites' hooker, Ken Taylor, had won the strike.

Latterly, too, their formidable South African second row forward, I. C. Jones, took the bit between his teeth and made ground through sheer fitness and strength. Oxford staged a superb last-minute rally to notch their last two tries by R. D. Hearn, centre.

## UTTER CONFUSION

One of these came after an extremely long handling bout which alternated from the now-rapid forwards, to the threes as the Varsity poured incredible last reserves of energy into the game to the utter confusion of Gloucester, beginning to relax a little with a comfortable 13-6 lead.

Those closing minutes were as exciting as any in the match and showed how dangerous Oxford can be when the rhythm of their running and passing is on the down-beat.

The also showed that Gloucester can ill-afford to count their chickens, especially when they know their opposition ought to be not only younger but fitter too.

Footnote: Rutherford, who played yet another faultless game for Gloucester at full-back, passed his century in points for this season. He scored a goal and kicked two conversions for a total of seven points to bring his tally to 101.

## UNITED GAVE OLD BLUES A SHOCK

GLOUCESTER UNITED ....	15 Pts.
OLD BLUES .....	8 Pts.

Old Blues never really recovered from a United scoring spree in the first 15 minutes.

Perhaps the visitors, who usually play the Gloucester first XV., expected something of the sort – but with the roles reversed! They clearly did not expect the onslaught which hit them in the opening stages.

Tries by Farr, Vallender, Hopson and Osman all but demoralised the visitors. To their great credit, however, Old Blues pulled themselves together and made a game of it.

They made a promising start with a penalty by Richardson, who later converted an early second-half try by Gaine.

The stage was set, it seemed, for a ding-dong last minute scuffle for victory.

Terry Hopson put a stop to that. He broke magnificently and passed on to Vallender, who bobbed and weaved his way round an assortment of people.

His fellow centre, Morris, was there to put the appropriate finishing touches to the manoeuvre.

An Old Blues attack on the United line at a time when there were only four points in it, nearly put the cat among the pigeons; but full-back Laurie came up from behind making a racing tackle and saved the day.

JC